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ABSTRACT

The Kountze Public Library in Texas conducted a program using cross-age tutoring as a strategy to strengthen family reading skills, to develop a collection of educational literacy materials in the library, and to disseminate results to the public. During the 1-year program, 29 volunteers participated, with 14 trained as tutors. Tutors worked 64 hours, and community members assisting with site and material preparation worked 190 hours. The youngest volunteer was 7 and the oldest 87. Twenty-three adults were tested for the program, with 14 following through and participating in 950 hours of instruction; 3 obtained their high school equivalency certification. Fifteen persons obtained library cards, and one found employment as a result of the programs. Reading gains were achieved through the program, as shown through pre- and posttest results of administration of the Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales. All of the adults who finished the classes expressed a desire to continue the program. Transportation, child care, and longer hours of instruction were cited as future programming needs. As a result of the program, many adult literacy materials were added to the library. (Three brief papers by Mary C. Johnston are included in the report: "Tutoring in History," "Illiteracy and the Challenge," and "Three Types of Illiteracy Handicapping Americans.") (KC)

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Final Report for LSCA Library Literacy Grant
Kountze Public Library

1. Comparison of Proposed and Actual Accomplishments of Goals

In Kountze, an economically depressed rural community in Texas, 42% of the adults in the county lack a high school degree. The need for adult education services was tremendous. Through funding by a LSCA Library Literacy grant from the Department of Education, Kountze Public Library was able to experience success in the implementation of Cross-Age Tutoring A Family Literacy Project. The goals of the project were met.

Goal: It was the goal of this program to utilize Cross-Age Tutoring as a strategy to strengthen family reading skills, to develop a collection of educational literacy materials in the Kountze Public Library, and to disseminate results of the project to the public.

Originally, 15 tutors were to be trained to work with 20 adults. In this program a total of 29 volunteers participated with 14 being trained as tutors. Actual instruction time was lower than desired. Tutors worked 64 hours. Community members assisted with material and site preparation and worked 190 hours. The youngest volunteer was 7 and the oldest 87. Cross-Age Tutoring truly utilized intergenerational efforts. A handful of volunteers demonstrated great commitment. As a result, tutoring has continued behond the life of this grant and is still occuring on a regular basis.

The combined efforts of teacher, assistant, and tutors insured much individualization of instruction in a quality program with adequate staffing.

A minor problem experienced was keys. Locks at both the Annex and Church were changed out several times. No security problems occured. 10 books were not returned from students who moved. These can be considered as consummable workbooks. However, they will need to pay a fine to continue library services.

For adults to experience success in reading, vision must be corrected when glasses are needed. It was discovered that limited services are available for low income adults. One lady traveled to another city and still experienced difficulties in receiving assistance. Children are helped through the local Lion's Club. No one helps adults however. This is an area for future development.

23 adults were tested for Cross-Age Tutoring. 14 followed through and participated in 950 hours of instruction. 3 were assisted in attaining their G.E.D. Scholarships

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were received from donation by local Extension Homemaker Club to pay for test fees. 22 adults had previously received their G.E.D. but wished to participate to strengthen skills. 9 only attended a few sessions and then dropped out. 4 of them moved, and 3 experienced major health problems. 1 attended irregularly due to shift work. 3 attended faithfully during school year but could not participate in summer due to childcare needs. In addition, 5 other adults expressed interest in the program but were not enrolled. They were unable to make a long term commitment. One lived outside of town and transportation could not be arranged. Another, a limited English speaking migrant, disappeared after 12 hours of classes. One adult requested assistance the last week of services and was referred to the next class.

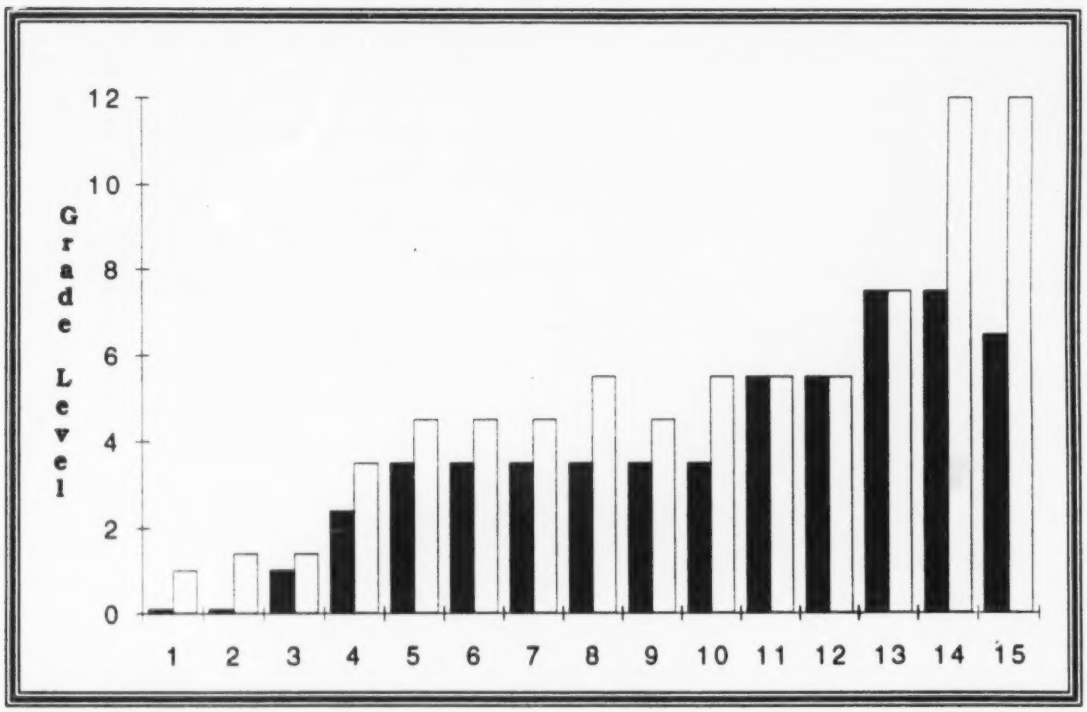
15 new patrons received library cards. 1 participant, after referral from C.A.T. was employed at a local grocery store.

Gains were evidenced on post tests of the Spache. See charts. Survey results indicated positive attitudes by all participating adults at end of the program. All expressed desire for continuation. Transportation, childcare, and longer hours of instruction were cited as needs in future programming.

Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales				
Pre and Post Tests				
pre-sight,oral	post	pre-silent	post	# of Hours
0.1	1	0.1	1	44
0.1	1.4	1.4	1.6	85
1	1.4	1.4	1.4	99
2.4	3.5	2.8	3.5	52
3.5	4.5	3.5	6.5	29
3.5	4.5	4.5	5.5	58
3.5	4.5	3.5	4.5	90
3.5	5.5	4.5	7.5	74
3.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	56
3.5	5.5	4.5	4.5	40
5.5	5.5	6.5	7.5	50
5.5	5.5	5.5	6.5	34
7.5	7.5	7.5	12	24
7.5	12	7.5	12	118
6.5	12	7.5	12	15
* The ceiling on the Spache is 7.5. 12 signifies G.E.D. achieved.				

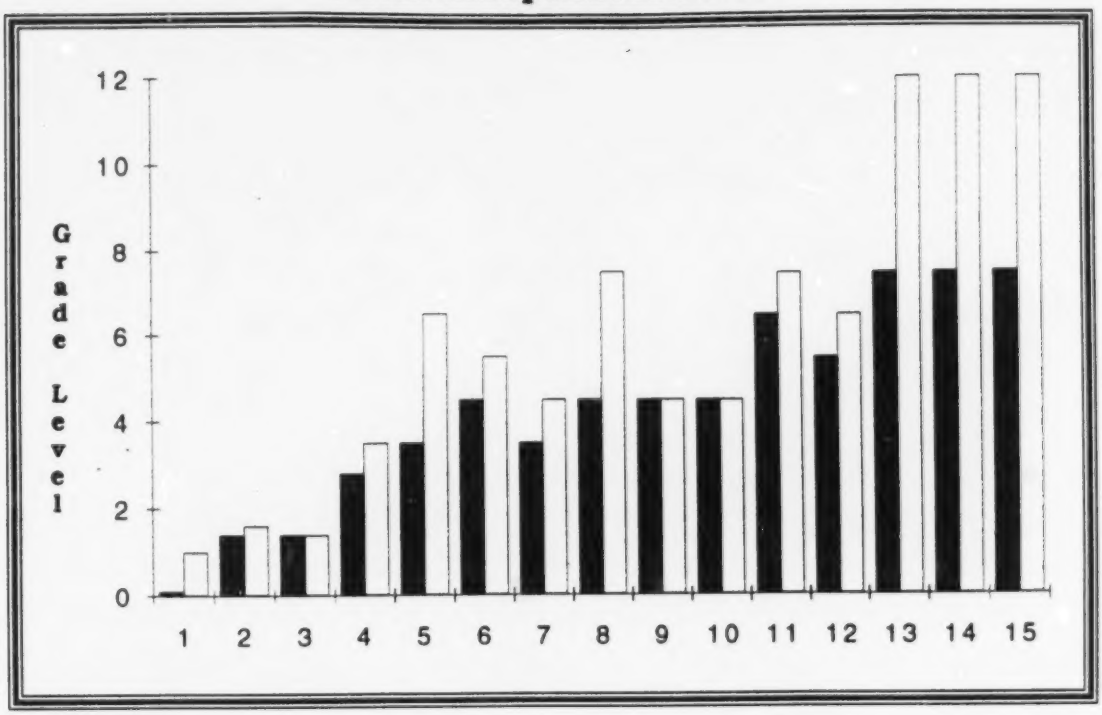
Analysis of Testing

Three components on the Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales were analyzed. Word Identification skills determined an Instructional Level, Silent Reading measured the student's Independent Level, and Auditory Comprehension estimated a Potential Level. Pre and post test versions were compared in bar graph format.



Two clients when tested were unable to write their name or identify the letters of the alphabet. Another read at the first grade level. At the other end of the spectrum, three adults exhibited advanced skills. One student previously attained his G.E.D., but wished to improve his skills, particularly in the area of Spelling.

Silent Independent Level



Proposed and Actual Expenditures in Budget

The budget was adherred to closely. A few changes occured in purchasing of materials. Substitutions were made when vendor had discontinued item or had an address change and could not be contacted.

Actual expenditures on books was less than budgeted as magazine subscriptions were not ordered. It was requested that $350 of this unspent money could be applied to audit, as audit expenses were not budgeted. The City of Kountze contracted the audit. A certified letter followed by four phone calls and FAX of information was forwarded to the Department of Education to request this change. The request was approved.

Salaries closely followed those listed in proposal. All times were documented with Time Sheets. The librarian delegated some of her book processing responsibilities to an aide. Thus, the librarian worked less and her assistant more. No changes occured in amount budgeted for these services.

Mary C. Johnston certified that all expenditures reported (and payments requested) were for appropriate purposes and in accordance with the agreements set forth in the application and award documents.

Budget Breakdown:

Salaries:	$14,255.61
Rent:	$400.00
Materials:	$19564.11
Audit:	$350.00
	$34,569.72

Activities Undertaken

Materials:

$20,000 in books and equipment were purchased for Kountze Public Library's Adult Literacy collection. Reading materials at all levels were purchased for comprehensive instruction in phonics, vocabulary building, comprehension, spelling, dictionary use, grammar, and study skills.

To teach critical literacy and use reading as a tool to gain information applicable in

daily living, materials were selected to teach job skills and improve the quality of home life. These included Career Readers, a Job Opportunity Series, a Coping Series, and books on how to improve home life and prevent substance abuse. The Extension Agency shared 45 brochures at no charge. 10 copies of each were duplicated, laminated, and filed at sites for small group use. This literature was used 215 times. Audio cassettes were made by volunteers from the Extension Agency's Getting to Work Series. This teaches reading skills through the auditory mode. These were used 25 times. In addition, Kountze Public Library scheduled showings of job skill videos and one entitled "The Importance of Reading" for interested patrons. These are now available for general checkout.

Materials were selected for use with a variety of teaching techniques. A complete phonic program was purchased through A Beka. This included flashcards, phonic charts, cassette, and the book The Handbook to Reading. Each student was given The Quick Word Handbook for Every Day Writers to use as a personal dictionary. Language Experience methods were used through materials by Trillium Press. Cassettes taught reading auditorily. Programmed reading kits and sequenced reading texts were also purchased. Kountze I.S.D. donated out of adoption texts and workbooks and sample learning kits. Materials were purchased depicting individual success stories of minorities and women to raise self esteem and build confidence. Your Family History and How to Tape Instant Oral Biographies were used to involve learners in reading and writing activites which were of personal interest.

As Kountze Public Library is a small rural one, it is not automated at this time. Use of Winnebago software provided some training in the making of card catalogs and a bibliography. A few problems were encountered. 3 updates were needed in one year and data was difficult to merge. KPL would be hesitant to automate the entire library using this system in the future. In praise of the system, Winnebago personnel were courteous, encouraging, and helpful and the software did speed up the processing of materials.

The coordinator designed three levels of Individualized Educational Programs for reading and vocational-life skills. Materials were then correlated to specific skills to facilitate their use. After testing participants, the coordinator matched their performance level to an I.E.P. This became their lesson plan for instruction.

Material Workshops were conducted at Mt. Corinth Church on January 2-3, in the

Johnston home on January 4-5, and at the library on January 28. Materials were stamped, laminated, cut, and filed.

Needs Assessment

The Hardin County Extension Agency in their Long Range Plan 1991-94 documented serious educational needs of county adults. Adult literacy was listed as a critical issue in need of development. As a member of the Executive Board of the Extension Agency, Mary Johnston was most concerned and applied for funding for this grant as a result of this data. Johnston also compiled literacy statistics on the National, State, and Local levels for a flyer which was shared with Kountze I.S.D. school board members and others interested in adult literacy.

Training

In October the grant coordinator met informally with the Library Board and the Texas Agricultural Extension Agency to explain grant details and needs and plan recruitment. The coordinator then prepared a packet of information which included teaching procedures, a timeline, and job descriptions. This was shared at workshops.

The Leadership Workshop took place at the Library on October 14, 1991. Topics discussed were "Goals, Adult Literacy Rationale, Plan of Operations, and Recordkeeping."

On October 23, 1991 Johnston met with members of Mt. Corinth Church to elicit participation. On November 1, 1991 Johnston met with Hardin County Judge Mayfield. He announced use of the Annex at no charge and offered to have the site painted.

On December 6, 1991 Johnston explained the program to the Kountze City Council. Details regarding finances and accounting procedures were outlined.

A Tutor Training Workshop was presented at Kountze High School on January 6, 1992 with members of the Future Teacher's Club. Students reviewed statistics and analyzed the scope of illiteracy at the national, state, and local levels. Using cartoons, students discussed the implications of poor reading skills in school, on the job, and in the quality of life. Students were presented with sample teaching techniques, a review of educational materials, and basic recordkeeping procedures. A Training Video was produced with the assistance of the Hardin County Extension Agency. It synthesized all information needed for the implementation of Cross-Age Tutoring A

Family Literacy Project. It was 2 hours in length and included the following components: A Leadership Training Roundtable Presentation and filming of the Tutor Training with input from the high school Future Teacher's Club. A corresponding manual was written by the coordinator. This was not required by the grant. It was shared with the state office of the Agricultural Extension Agency. The video and corresponding manual will facilitate training of volunteers in the future.

After the culmination of Cross-Age Tutoring, the coordinator conducted a "Literacy Leadership Training Workshop." Johnston assisted the Extension Agency in writing a grant for G.E.D. funds. Hardin County was awarded $89,400 by the J.T.P.A. for these classes. This workshop familiarized leaders with library materials and services and facilitated a smooth transition between projects.

Library Role

Kountze Public Library hosted training and material workshops and served as a site for the viewing of educational videos. Kountze library equipment was used in the processing of books. Adult literacy materials were given a spot of high visibility, being immediately adjacent the front desk. Materials were also available for general checkout. The library served as a community information network in advertising the program and in the recruitment of tutors and volunteers. Deborah Childress, KPL Director, wrote newspaper articles informing the community about literacy activities and attended an adult literacy seminar in Houston for additional training.

Agencies and Organizations Who Assisted

The Texas Agricultural Extension Agency assisted this project from the very beginning. The grant coordinator, Mary Johnston, is also an Executive Board member of this organization. In the Long Range Plan for Hardin County 1991-94 an Extension Agency task force listed literacy as a critical issue. As a result, key community leaders were most concerned about enhancing educational opportunities for adults. The Extension Agency distributed the "Hardin County Volunteer Handbook" and advertised the program. They also provided numerous booklets for instructional use. Region V Teacher Service Center loaned a quality tape recorder so that material could be recorded.

The Hardin County Judge Tom Mayfield granted permission to use a site at the

County Annex free of charge. Trustees from the County Jail moved boxes of books and furniture. Kountze Independent School District loaned the use of tables, chairs, and donated book samples and out of adoption texts.

Members of Greater Mount Corinth Church assisted in site set up, moving furniture and books, and in preparing educational materials. The program was a great success. The highest enrollment was evidenced at the church. Several participants assisted in carpooling voluntarily. This enabled those that wished to attend but did not have transportation to continue classes. Church members installed locks and pencil sharpener on wall. Other churches hung flyers and advertised the project in their bulletins.

The City of Kountze was cooperative. Mayor Carl A. Richardson was most supportive, as well as Mayor Charles Bilal, his successor. Mayor Bilal recruited participants. The City Secretary assisted with financial management by communicating with the bank and collecting mail.

The Kountze Future Teacher Club participated in Tutor Training. The Hardin County Extension Homemakers Club donated $140 to pay for G.E.D. test fees for low income adults. They also designed an Adult Literacy Exhibit for the Texas State Fair using data provided by the coordinator.

The Women's Club of Kountze hosted a reception for participants at the conclusion of the project. Adults were awarded certificates by Mayor Bilal.

As Kountze Public Library is a very small facility with limited meeting room space, two other sites were utilized. The Hardin County Annex to the courthouse and Greater Mt. Corinth Church offered classes two days per week.

Impact of Program to the Community

Cross-Age Tutoring A Family Literacy Project laid the groundwork for the development of adult literacy strategies in Hardin County. A strong collection of literacy materials were purchased for Kountze Public Library. None were available before. Although 2nd year funding was not awarded by the Department of Education, instruction is still occurring. $89,400 was awarded to Hardin County via the Extension Agency through the J.T.P.A. for G.E.D. classes. In addition, the coordinator contacted Beaumont I.S.D.'s Adult Learning Center and met with Kountze I.S.D.'s school board. As a result, the two districts are co-opping "Adult Basic Education." Classes resumed

at Greater Mt. Corinth Church. Former Cross-Age Tutoring instructors are involved in both projects. Library literacy materials are utilized at each site.

Cross- Age Tutoring was a successful experience and a positive example of how various agencies can cooperate and implement a quality literacy program. Participants rated the project highly and at its conclusion were begging for more. The economy of Hardin County is still depressed and the educational levels of its citizens low. The need is tremendous. This project served as a foundation. Hopefully, its effects will be felt far into the future.

Free Brochures Teach Critical Literacy Skills

In Texas, one in three adults cannot read and in rural Hardin County 42% of the adult population has not graduated from high school. These alarming statistics prompted Kountze Public Library under a LSCA Library Literacy grant from the Department of Eduation to initiate a Cross-Age Tutorial Program. Besides upgrading basic reading skills which were measured by pre and post test versions of the Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales, critical issues in life skills were addressed. According to the program coordinator, Mary Johnston, "The purpose of adult literacy projects is to enhance the quality of life through education. Why not utilize materials which stress home management, child development, budget, and job skills while teaching academics? Every county has free through its Cooperative Extension Service brochures which target these subject areas! These can be used in small group settings to successfully develop both reading and life skills. Motivation among adults is extremely high because this valuable knowledge is directly applicable to their daily lives."

Data Sources:

Extension Today, Vol. 10, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Fall 1991.

Long Range Plan 1991-94 Hardin County, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Kountze, TX, 1990.

Tutoring in History

by Mary C. Johnston

Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to lift him up.

Ecclesiastes 4 : 9-10

History can provide models of tutoring strategies that form the basis for the development of successful educational programs. In the eighth century B.C., the Spartans selected older children to tutor younger ones. Quintilian mentioned the success of student tutors, and in Hindu schools mutual instruction dates back to ancient times. In Didactica Magna, John Comenius (1632) stated, "He who teaches others teaches himself. Not only does repetition impress a fact upon the mind, but the process of teaching gives a deeper insight into the subject. Furthermore, if a student wishes to make progress, he should give lessons daily in the subjects which he is studying even if he has to hire his student. (Allen, 1976)

In 1797 Andrew Bell became superintendent of an "asylum" in Madras, India. It was established for orphans who were primarily the sons of British soldiers and Indian mothers. He experienced a great deal of frustration with many being, "in general, stubborn, perverse, and obstinate." He devised a tutorial system of olders teaching youngers which transformed the school. "The school is thus rendered a scene of amusement to scholars and a spectacle of delight to the beholder... For months together it has not been found necessary to inflict a single punishment." (Allen, 1976)

Joseph Lancaster enthusiastically accepted and vigorously publicized Bell's system. In 1816, according to Bell, one hundred thousand pupils were being taught in England and Wales using the Bell-Lancaster tutorial methods. Lancaster asserted that up to one thousand students could be taught by only one adult teacher. The instructor drilled the olders to work with the youngers, who might drill still others younger than themselves causing a multiplicative effect. (Strain, 1981)

Several factors contributed to this success. The working-class school was treated and organized as a "machine" similar in many ways to the industrial production schemes which dominated the era. Lancaster used basic Reading, Spelling and Math skill hierarchies. Student placement was entirely dependent on demonstrated proficiency. Mastery meant automatic promotion. This technique is similar to modern day task analysis and behavioral objectives. The entire program triumphed and became the most acclaimed innovation in the organization of mass education during the first half of the nineteenth century. (Strain, 1981

Melargno and Newmark (1969; 1970) developed a modern application of Lancasterian thought. They proposed a tutoring solution for those who were not being successfully educated under the existing system. Using peer tutors and a programmed curriculum, the system enjoyed success and inspired interest and imitation in thousands of settings. Ultimately, possibly due to the political turmoil which inevitably accompanies change, the program was not sustained. Melaragno-Newmark was of value in that it heralded a new era in understanding the potentials and problems of tutoring. By utilizing the scientific approach in their research, they provided a basis for others wishing to develop alternative educational programs.

Gartner, Kohler and Riesman (1971) were intimately associated with antipoverty and compensatory education. Their programs differed from Lancasterian tradition because they were interested in the affective and attitudinal results accrued in the tutoring process. These are indeed beneficial. Helping others strengthens feelings of responsibility, trust, love, and compassion while improving academic skills. Cooperative methods of learning, rather than competitive, encourage rather than discourage. Through cross-age tutoring, improved communication bridges the generation gap. Furthermore, tutoring methods take advantage of all community resources, both within and outside of traditional school settings. The ultimate frustration for the low achiever is failure. This devastates self image, morale, and the opportunities for success in life. Society's failure to educate the weaker links in the chain, hastens its destruction. One can learn from history and avert disaster.

The word tutor comes from the Latin "tueri" which means to protect, guard, care for.

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Melaragno, R.J. & Newmark, G. A tutorial community works towards specified objectives in an elementary school. Educational Horizons, 1969/1970, 48, 33-37.

Illiteracy and the Challenge

by Mary C. Johnston

Education in modern American society faces tremendous challenges. The rapid integration of technology has not strengthened academic performance in the masses. Paradoxically, as more demands are placed on workers, general academic abilities decline. Adult illiteracy increases by 2.25 million persons each year. Nationally, about 27 million Americans are functionally illiterate and an additional million have only marginal literacy abilities necessary to perform everyday reading, writing, and comprehension tasks. (Denver Post, 1988)

Lawrence P. Feldman, Marketing Professor, summarizes the problem, "In the American population, 20 percent of all adults are illiterate. Now, at the onset of the so-called information age spawned by microtechnology, we are asking the same population to be even more skillful than ever before." (Mullen, 1990)

Improved academic skills increase chances for success and enhance financial opportunities and the quality of family life. It is imperative that the implementation of adult education strategies be actively pursued. This is of extreme importance because a link exists between illiteracy, which like child abuse, can be perpetuated from one generation to the next. Dr. Peggy Owens states, "Parents have a strong influence over the attitudes of their children towards education. Illiterate parents, having failed in their own schooling, often don't or can't support their children's learning." (Mayes, 1991)

A dynamic challenge for today's educators must be the organization of a network of adult education services for all segments of the population. Instruction in skills ranging from the very basic to advanced must be available, publicized, and utilized! Volunteer participation yields the highest results. However, mandatory participation in adult classes is certainly of merit. Serious review of the quality of educational services and job skill training available for those who are unemployed or incarcerated is needed. Communication between school systems, public agencies, and the marketplace must be enhanced. Cooperative strategies utilizing all available resources in a community will strengthen academic skills and help break the cycle of illiteracy eroding at the quality of life in America today.

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Illiteracy statistics. Denver Post, August, 1988, 1.

Mayes, D. Extension seeks to help break cycle of illiteracy. Extension Today. Fall, 1991, 10, 1.

Mullen, W. Techno #$%@&#! Phobia. Florida Times Union, May 1990, C1.

Three Types of Illiteracy Handicapping Americans

by Mary C. Johnston

An alarming segment of American society suffers from illiteracy and this population is growing! Nationally, about 27 million or 30% of the adults in this country have been identified as functionally illiterate. Frighteningly, this group increases by 2.25 million people annually! These individuals are unable to perform such tasks as reading street signs or master the written portion of a driver's test. In Texas alone about 3.3 million people, 1 in 3 adults, are functionally illiterate.(Literacy Fact Sheet, 1991) This negatively impacts life in the United States. In 1988 the Texas Department of Commerce ,for example, estimated that illiteracy cost Texas $17.12 billion each year through lost productivity, unrealized tax revenue, welfare, and costs associated with criminal activity. (Extension Today, 1991) Apathy towards this critical issue must be overcome and aggressive educational strategies implemented. The scope of illiteracy in America is indeed a national crisis.

In a nutshell , three types of illiteracy handicap Americans. Basic rock bottom illiteracy is the inability to perform fundamental reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. Programs designed with a hierarchy of skills presented through different modes will most benefit the learner. Testing determines placement. Various teaching techniques including phonics, sight word analysis, auditory-visual methods, and language experience will provide variety and stimulation for students aspiring to improve reading skills.

Critical illiteracy involves competency in basic life skills. The purpose for the development of reading skills is to assist in the acquisition of knowledge for application in life. Critical literacy enhances the quality of one's environment both in the home and on the job while enabling the learner to become a better problem solver. Sample topics addressing critical literacy skills include job skills, health, nutrition, substance abuse, family finance, and insurance. A quality adult reading program will utilize vocational materials, in essence killing two birds with one stone. Classes become meaningful for the older learner as they directly benefit everyday life.

A third type of illiteracy involves computers. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, in the near future, 50 to 75 percent of all jobs will use computers. By European estimates, 70 percent of the future working population will use computers and other technology. (Calkins, 1988) To truly prepare adults as productive members in a rapidly developing technological society, competency in computer skills is a must. The Adult Learning and Literacy Clearinghouse through the Department of Education provides an excellent bibliography of computer resources, software-buyers guides, and computer assisted project designs for those considering implementation of adult computer tutorial programming.

Adult education is a crucial need. The problem is further magnified because the majority of workers at all levels will need substantial retraining every 5 to

8 years, regardless of whether they change careers or stay in existing jobs. (Perelman, 1986)

The crisis in education has never been more acute. Illiteracy in America is on the rise, despite the fact that total spending for education and training in the United States exceeds more than $300 billion per year. (Perelman, 1986) The current mediocre standards in the American education system have not been able to successfully educate its citizens. Innovative designs, utilizing all community resources for people of all ages must be implemented. Library checkout programs must be encouraged and delivery instigated to nonmobile populations, especially the elderly and the incarcerated. Libraries are a tremendous resource. However, often they are not tapped to their fullest potential. Book output , for example, through the public library system declined 17.2% in 1990. Volunteer programs need to be encouraged utilizing tutors and mentors. These can be arranged informally or structured. Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach are two methods being used in communities around the country. The U.S.Department of Education Clearinghouse on Adult Education and Literacy can provide additional information as well as the Opening Doors to Literacy National Hotline (800-228-8813). Partnerships between the business and education must be forged. The feasibility of using school facilities for community educational services after school hours can also be explored.

Public awareness certainly must be heightened. A major shift in media presentation is needed. What would be the implications if the heroes in education, the scientists, the doctors, the teachers, and the talented students, received equal attention with athletes? What might happen if the "Education" section in the newspaper were as large as that of "Sports?" Certainly, illiteracy would be overcome if the masses in the United States today felt as motivated towards education as they do towards national football or basketball games. Another major consideration is academic expectations. Asian schools are internationally renowned for their excellence in education. The Scientific American (December, 1992) stated a major difference between Asian schools and its counterparts in America could lie in goalsetting. Beijing children wished for educational goals, such as going to college. Chicago children preferred money and material objects, such as toys or pets. Perhaps, Americans need to seriously reevaluate goals and refocus priorities.

Positive changes begin with an acceptance of the severity and scope of the problem combined with a willingness to improve. Support for existing programs, networking, and the organization of services for non-served populations is essential. Furthermore, if instruction is structured in three areas- basic literacy, critical literacy, and computer skills, optimum success will result. Adults will learn basic skills, improved home management and job skills, and proficiency in technology, all of which will raise the quality of life for Americans and break the cycle of illiteracy this nation.

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Profile

Mary C. Johnston began her teaching career while still in high school. As a student at Spring Woods High School, located in the suburbs of Houston, she volunteered for tutoring at Carverdale Community Center. The program was organized through St. Jerome's Catholic Church. At this time, schools were primarily segregated. Although Carverdale was located within a mile of Mary's home, Blacks did not attend her school and were bused to Cyfair School District instead. The inequity of this situation bothered the girl. Johnston decided to become a teacher and to help others through education.

As an undergraduate at the University of Houston, Johnston worked as a tutor for emotionally disturbed adolescents at Edgemoor School and taught Spanish at Sullivan Language School. She graduated Cum Laude in 1975 with certification in Elementary Education, Early Childhood-Special Education, Kindergarten, and Spanish.

Johnston taught 2nd grade bilingual with Houston I.S.D. and then moved to Beaumont, Texas with her husband. Through great sacrifice, Johnston juggled family life, taught 4th grade at Cathedral in the Pines, and attended night and summer classes at Lamar University. Her interest in tutoring continued and Johnston researched the subject in an independent study under Dr. Michael Cass. By 1983, Johnston achieved a Master's Degree in Special Education. She recieved her diploma pregnant with her 4th child!

Mary Johnston is currently employed as a Special Education teacher in Kountze and serves as a member of the Executive Board of the Hardin County Extension Agency where she is involved in long range planning for the county. She believes strongly that to make a difference in the lives of children, one must strengthen the skills of adults. Working cooperatively with the Extension Agency, Johnston served on numerous committees and assisted with the formulation of the Hardin County Long Range Plan 1991-94. 42% of the county's population was identified as lacking a high school degree and adult education was targeted as a critical issue.

Johnston's love of writing and persistent dedication towards the improvement of educational services for the disadvantaged resulted in success as a grant writer. In October 1991 Mary Johnston was awarded $34,580 through a LSCA Library Literacy grant from the Department of Education. She was able to purchase $20,000 of materials and equipment for Kountze Public Library and implemented "Cross-Age Tutoring A Family Literacy Project." A manual and trainging video was produced to assist other communities in replicating this instructional strategy. In 1992, Johnston again worked cooperatively with the Extension Agency. As a result, Hardin County received $89,400 from the J.T.P.A. to fund G.E.D.classes for low income adults. She also encouraged Beaumont I.S.D. and Kountze I.S.D. to co-op services for Adult Basic Education classes. These are currently offered two nights per week at Greater Mount Corinth Church in Kountze, Texas. It appears Johnston's efforts from high school volunteer to tutorial coordinator and grant writer have come full circle.